

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 NEA-10 ISO-00 HEW-06 OES-07 AID-05
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: WHO

SUBJECT: WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY PRESIDENCY FOR 1978

REF: KUWAIT 918

1. WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY TRADITION SINCE ABOUT REPEAT ABOUT
1969 IS TO ROTATIONALLY SELECT ITS PRESIDENT FROM AMONG THE
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WHO WORLD GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS.

2. PRIOR TO 1969 THERE WAS NO REGULAR SEQUENCE, RESULTING
IN COMPLAINTS THAT SOME REGIONS AND COUNTRIES HELD THE
PRESIDENCY MORE OFTEN THAN OTHERS. FOR EQUITY, AN INFORMAL
AGREEMENT WAS MADE TO ROTATE THE PRESIDENCY AMONG REGIONS.
THE MOST RECENT COMPLETE CYCLE AMONG THE SIX REGIONS IS AS

FOLLOWS: (A) 1972 - 25TH WHA, REGION FOR THE AMERICAS, CANADA, DR. LAYTON; (B) 1973 - 26TH WHA, SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGION, INDONESIA, DR. SULIANTI; (C) 1974 - 27TH WHA, EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION, IRAN, DR. PAUYAN; (D) 1975 - 28TH WHA, EUROPEAN REGION, BELGIUM, DR. HALTER; (E) 1976 - 29TH WHA, AFRICAN REGION, MAURITIUS, DR. WALTER; (F) 1977 - 30TH WHA, WESTERN PACIFIC REGION, TONGA, DR. TAPA.

3. THUS, FOLLOWING THE ABOVE SEQUENCE, THE WHA PRESIDENCY BY AGREED ACCESSION WOULD BE: THE AMERICAS FOR 1978,

SOUTHEAST ASIA FOR 1979 AND THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN (POSSIBLY KUWAIT) FOR 1980.

4. THE MISUNDERSTANDING COULD POSSIBLY BE DUE TO CONFUSION ABOUT WHICH REGION TONGA IS IN. IF TONGA WERE IN THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGION, 1978 WOULD BELONG TO THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. BUT TONGA IS IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE AMERICAS. ADDITIONALLY, EACH YEAR ONE PRESIDENT AND FIVE VICE PRESIDENTS ARE ELECTED. EACH OF THE SIX REGIONS FILLS ONE OF THE SIX POSITIONS. PERHAPS THE FEBRUARY 1977 COUNCIL OF ARAB HEALTH MINISTERS INTENDED FOR KUWAIT TO BE THE WHA 1978 VICE PRESIDENT FROM THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION. FURTHER, IT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S UNDERSTANDING THAT WHO GENEVA HAS, IN RESPONSE TO INQUIRY, RECENTLY INFORMED KUWAIT THAT THE 1978 - 31ST WHA PRESI-

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DENCY, IS DUE TO GO TO THE AMERICAS REGION WITH STRONG SUPPORT FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. IT IS DOUBTFUL "THAT THERE IS REAL DISAGREEMENT ABOUT WHOSE TURN IT IS" CHRISTOPHER

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